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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 08/07/07

Part-1

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1) Poll on Abe cabinet, political parties

2) Asahi-Todai joint poll: Constitutional revisionists below two thirds in Diet upper chamber; Barrier to initiating amendments in 3 years

Articles:

1) Poll on Abe cabinet, political parties

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)

June 19, 2007

Questions & Answers

(Figures shown in percentage. Parentheses denote the results of a survey conducted in June.)

Q: Do you support the Abe cabinet?

Yes 27.2 (38.3)

No 63.7 (50.6)

Other answers (O/A) 3.1 (2.8)

No answer (N/A) 5.9 (8.3)

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the foregoing question)

Give up to two reasons for your approval of the Abe cabinet.

I can appreciate its political stance 27.6 (30.8)

It's stable 8.8 (11.8)

The prime minister is trustworthy 22.0 (23.2)  
 There's a fresh image of the prime minister 29.4 (34.8)  
 I can appreciate its economic policy 7.4 (4.8)  
 I can appreciate its foreign policy 11.3 (15.2)  
 Because it's a coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New  
 Komeito 19.8 (14.8)  
 It's better than its predecessors 8.6 (11.9)  
 O/A+N/A 11.1 (7.2)

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the foregoing question) Give up to two reasons for your disapproval of the Abe cabinet.

I can't appreciate its political stance 47.1 (45.9)  
 It's unstable 34.1 (34.4)  
 The prime minister is untrustworthy 26.3 (25.3)  
 The prime minister lacks political experience 18.2 (14.4)  
 I can't appreciate its economic policy 18.8 (22.9)  
 I can't appreciate its foreign policy 3.4 (6.8)  
 Because it's a coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New  
 Komeito 8.7 (11.3)  
 It's worse than its predecessors 12.8 (10.0)  
 O/A+N/A 4.5 (3.9)

Q: What issues do you want the Abe cabinet to pursue on a priority basis? Pick as many as you like from among those listed below, if any.

Economic, employment measures 51.7  
 Fiscal reconstruction 22.1  
 Tax reform, consumption tax 33.9  
 Social security reform, including pension and healthcare systems 65.1  
 Low birthrate countermeasures, including childcare support

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24.9  
 Educational reform 20.9  
 Administrative reform, including public service personnel cuts 20.8  
 Social divide, including income gaps 32.7  
 Yasukuni Shrine 4.3  
 Asia diplomacy, including China and South Korea 11.4  
 North Korea 20.6  
 Defense, security 9.8  
 Constitutional revision 7.4  
 Crisis management, including disaster prevention 11.2  
 Public security, crime prevention 15.1  
 Environmental protection 18.6  
 Food safety 23.7  
 O/A + nothing in particular + N/A 4.0

Q: Which political party do you support now? Pick only one.

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 25.8 (32.9)  
 Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 26.9 (14.3)  
 New Komeito (NK) 3.6 (4.0)  
 Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 2.2 (2.4)  
 Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1.0 (1.2)  
 People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.2 (0.2)  
 New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0.4 (---)  
 Other political parties 0.1 (---)  
 None 38.7 (44.4)  
 N/A 1.1 (0.7)

Q: Do you appreciate the job performance of Prime Minister Abe and his cabinet so far on the whole?

Appreciate very much 3.7  
 Appreciate somewhat 25.8  
 Don't appreciate very much 41.3  
 Don't appreciate at all 25.3  
 N/A 3.9

Q: Prime Minister Abe will now remain in office, saying he will push ahead with reforms and wants to fulfill his responsibility as prime minister. Do you think Prime Minister Abe will be able to obtain

actual results?

Yes	17.8
No	54.4
Can't say which	25.2
N/A	2.6

Q: Prime Minister Abe is expected to shuffle his cabinet shortly. Do you look forward to seeing his cabinet's new lineup?

Yes	21.9
Yes to a certain degree	20.0
No to a certain degree	24.4
No	30.8
N/A	3.0

Q: How long would you like the Abe cabinet to continue from now on? Pick only one from among those listed below.

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As long as possible	13.8
2 years or so	11.9
1 year or so	21.0
6 months or so	9.0
Resign as soon as possible	37.2
O/A	0.9
N/A	6.3

Polling methodology

Date of survey: Aug. 4-5.

Subjects of survey: 3,000 persons chosen from among all eligible voters throughout the country (at 250 locations on a stratified two-stage random sampling basis).

Method of implementation: Door-to-door visits for face-to-face interviews.

Number of valid respondents: 1,784 persons (59.5 percent).

2) Asahi-Todai joint poll: Constitutional revisionists below two thirds in Diet upper chamber; Barrier to initiating amendments in 3 years

ASAHI (Top play) (Full)  
August 7, 2007

Today, the Diet will convene an extraordinary session. Those recently elected to its House of Councillors will now be seated to attend the upper chamber. Among them, the proportion of those who support revising the Constitution is 48 percent, failing to reach 50 percent, the Asahi Shimbun found from its joint survey with the University of Tokyo (or Todai for short). Among all upper house members including those not up for reelection, the proportion of constitutional revisionists was 53 percent. The Asahi Shimbun has conducted such a survey to probe the attitudes of politicians on the occasion of every national election since the 2003 election for the House of Representatives. Amendments to the Constitution, however, must be initiated by at least two thirds of all the members of each chamber. Meanwhile, the proportion of those favoring constitutional revision fell below that level in the upper chamber for the first time. Also, when it comes to Article 9, which is the biggest focus of constitutional revision, 26 percent of those elected to the upper house supported revising the article's provisions, with 54 percent opposed to revising its provisions. On the whole, 31 percent of all upper house lawmakers supported revising Article 9, with 50 percent against it.

The Constitution stipulates that its amendments shall be initiated by the Diet through a concurring vote of two thirds or more of all the members of each chamber. In May, the Diet enacted the National Referendum Law. According to its provisions, the Diet is not allowed to present or discuss any draft amendments to the Constitution for three years until the law comes into effect. However, those elected to the upper chamber this time may have something to do with the Diet initiation of constitutional revision for the first time under constitutional government during their six-year term of office.

In the July 29 election for the House of Councillors, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party suffered a crushing defeat. Even so, Prime Minister Abe voiced his sustained willingness in his press remarks

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to amend the Constitution. However, one of the LDP's former top three executives is critical of Abe. "He's mistaken the order of priority," this former LDP executive said. "The people say this is no time for that," he added. There is such a view within the LDP over public opinion. In addition, those elected to the upper chamber stand in Abe's way. As far as their political mindset is concerned, Abe will likely face difficulties while he is aiming to initiate constitutional revision in 2010.

In the Asahi-Todai joint survey, those elected this time were asked if they thought that the Constitution should be amended. To this question, "yes" and "yes to a certain degree" totaled 48 percent, with "no" and "no to a certain degree" adding up to 31 percent.

Broken down into political parties, pro-amendment opinions accounted for 91 percent among the LDP's upper house members elected this time and 67 percent in the case of New Komeito, the LDP's coalition partner. The People's New Party (Kokumin Shinto) was at 100 percent for constitutional revision. These three parties accounted for a majority of opinions in favor of constitutional revision. In the case of the leading opposition Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto), however, 29 percent were in favor of constitutional revision while 41 percent were opposed to it. As seen from these figures, anti-revision opinions outnumbered pro-revision opinions among the DPJ's upper house members elected this time. In the case of the Japanese Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party (Shaminto), all of their respective upper house members elected this time were opposed to constitutional revision. The New Party Nippon (Shinto Nippon) also won a seat in the election, and its newly elected upper house member was against it as well.

The House of Councillors last elected its members in 2004. At that time, 71 percent of all upper house members were in favor of constitutional revision. This time around, however, the proportion of those in favor of constitutional revision in the upper chamber decreased more than 20 percent as a result of the LDP's rout in the election this time. Among the LDP's pre-election upper house members, those in favor of constitutional revision accounted for 90 percent or so.

In the meantime, some of the DPJ's pre-election upper house members, who were in favor of constitutional revision when surveyed in 2004, stood against it or were neutral in the survey this time. In the past surveys, 60 percent to 70 percent of both houses were in favor of constitutional revision. This time, however, the proportion of pro-revision lawmakers fell below 40 percent for the first time. This can be taken as reflecting public backlash against the LDP that steamrolled the national referendum legislation through the Diet.

The survey was conducted from late May through July with prospective candidates for this July's upper house election as well as with those not up for reelection and those expected to retire.

SCHIEFFER